

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OR 2 NEW DELHI 4330

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, IN
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIES OF NEW CABINET MINISTERS

FOLLOWING IS THE LIST OF 14 MINISTERS (13 JANATA AND ONE
AKALI DAL) SWORN IN MARCH 29 WITH BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL COMMENT. MORE
MORE DETAILED BIOGRAPHIES WILL BE SENT UPON ALLOCATION OF
PORTFOLIOS:

1. CHARAN SINGH: 71-YEAR OLD SINGH IS AN LLB FROM AGRA
UNIVERSITY, AN EX-CONGRESSMAN, FOUNDER-LEADER OF THE BLD
AND FORMER CHIEF MINISTER OF UTTAR PRADESH (1967-68, 1970).
A REGIONAL LEADER WITH STRENGTH IN UP, HARYANA AND RAJASTHAN,
SINGH IS AN MP NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME. A JAT, HE IS SENSITIVE
TO CONCERNS OF THE PEASANTRY, WAS ACTIVE IN ENFORCING LAND
REFORM IN UP, AND EMPHASIZES AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OVER
HEAVY INDUSTRY. IN 1970 HE DESCRIBED HIMSELF TO THE AMBASSAODR
AS FRIEND OF UNITED STATES AND ANTI-COMMUNIST. HE WAS JAILED
DURING EMERGENCY.

2. L.K. ADVANI: 50-YEAR-OLD L.K. ADVANI IS A SHAVEN SIKH,
BORN IN KARACHI AND EDUCATED IN LAW AT BOMBAY UNIVERSITY.
HE WAS RSSS ORGANIZER IN KARACHI AND AFTER PARTITION ENTERED
POLITICS IN DELHI. HE WAS CHOSEN PRESIDENT OF JANA SANGH IN
1973, IS A GENERAL-SECRETARY OF NEWLY FORMED JANATA, AND
WAS ELECTED A MEMBER OF THE RAJYA SABHA IN 1970. RELEASED
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FROM DETENTION IN JANUARY, HE HAS BEEN JANATA SPOKESMAN ON
ORGANIZATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS. ALTHOUGH RIGHTIST
AND CONSERVATIVE, HE IS A LIBERAL AMOUNG JANA SANGHIS, WAS
A STRONG ADVOCATE OF MERGER INTO JANATA, AND HELPED
DRAFT JANATA'S MANIFESTO. HE HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF US
NUCLEAR POLICY AND THE US POSITION ON PAKISTAN.

3. BIJU PATNAIK: 61- YEAR-OLD BIYOYANANDA PATNAIK IS AN FLAMBOYANT AVIATOR AND INDUSTRIALIST, FORMER CHIEF MINISTER OF ORISSA (1961-63), ONE-TIME MEMBER OF RAJYA SABHA AND A DETENU DURING EMERGENCY. IN 1970 HE FOUND HIS OWN UTKAL CONGRESS WHICH HE MERGED WITH THE BLD IN 1975. PATNAIK HAS BEEN DESCRIBED EARLIER IN HIS CAREER AS A MAN OF QUESTIONABLE INTEGRITY AND AN OPPORTUNIST, BUT ALSO AS ENERGETIC, RESOURCEFUL AND DARING, AN INNOVATOR AND EXPERIMENTOR WHO DOES NOT GO BY THE BOOK, CHARACTERISTICS WHICH MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO CHARGES OF CORRUPTION AND IRREGULARITY WHEN HE WAS CHIEF MINISTER. AS A BUSINESSMAN PATNAIK HAS FAVORED PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND HAS BEEN KNOWN AS AN ANTI-COMMUNIST.

4. ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: A 50-YEAR-OLD BRAHMIN BORN IN MADHYA PRADESH, VAJPAYEE IS A FORMER JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR, FOUNDER-MEMBER OF THE JANA SANGH AND ITS PRESIDENT FROM 1968-73. A LONG-TIME MEMBER OF THE LOK SABHA AND RAJYA SABHA, WHERE HE HAS BEEN PARTY SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, VAJPAYEE WHO WAS AN EMERGENCY DENTENU NOW REPRESENTS A NEW DELHI CONSTITUENCY. HE IS CREDITED WITH BROADENING THE JANA SANGH BASE AND LIBERALIZING ITS ATTITUDES. HE HAS BEEK A LONG-TIME ADVOCATE OF AN ALLIANCE OF NON-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION PARTIES. FOR A JANA SANGHI, HE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY PRO-WESTERN IN FOREIGN POLICY AND OUTLOOK, DISAGREEING WITH US POLICY NOTABLY ONLY ON PAKISTAN AND NUCLEAR MATTERS.

5. MOHAN DHARIA: A 52-YEAR-OLD ADVOCATE OF BOMBAY HIGH COURT, DHARIA WAS MEMBER OF PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY UNTIL 1961 WHEN HE JOINED CONGRESS PARTY. HE WAS MEMBER OF RAJYA CONFIDENTIAL

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SABHA, 1964-71, ELECTED TO LOK SABHA IN 1971, AND WAS MINISTER OF PLANNING UNTIL 1975. HE WAS MEMBER OF THE PARTY'S "YOUNG TURKS", AND PROPAGATED "LEFT OF CENTER" ECONOMIC POLICIES. HE ADVOCACY OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN MRS. GANDHI AND J.P. NARAYAN LED TO HIS REMOVAL FROM THE CABINET AND EVENTUAL DETENTION DURING THE EMERGENCY. DHARIA, IS FIRMLY ANTI-COMMUNIST AND IS FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THE U.S. HE WAS AN IVP GRANTEE IN 1964, BUT HWS AT TIMES CRITICIZED CERTAIN AMERICAN POLICIES.

6. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER: BORN IN 1919 IN CALCUTTA TO A DISTINGUISHED FAMILY, CHUNDDER HAS AN LLB AND A PHD IN ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY FROM CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY. HE IS A BENGALI NOVELIST OF REPUTE, A TRADITIONALIST AND A GANDHIAN IN THOUGHT, AND HIGHLY MORALISTIC. AFTER THE CONGRESS SPLIT HE REMAINED WITH CONGRESS-O. HE SUBSCRIBED TO GANDHIAN IDEALS OF DECENTRALIZATION, CONSIDERS HIMSELF A FRIEND OF THE US, A BELIEVER IN NON-ALIGNMENT AND DISLIKES THE SOVIETS. IN THE RECENT ELECTION HE DEFEATED THE STRONGLY

ENTRENCHZD PROFESSOR HIREN MUKERJEE OF THE CPI FOR THE
CALCUTTA NORTHEAST SEAT.

7. MADHU DANDAVATE: 53-YEAR-OLD, DANDAVATE IS A SOCIALIST
AND A TEACHER (VICE PRESIDENT AND HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
PHYSICS AT A COLLEGE IN BOMBAY UNTIL 1971). HE PARTICIPATED
IN THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT, THE ANTI-PORTUGUESE AGITATION
IN GOA, AND THE LAND LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN 1969. HE WAS AN
OFFICIAL OF THE PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY FOR YEARS AND ONE OF
THREE SOCIALISTS ELECTED TO THE LOK SABHA IN 1971. HE WAS
REELECTED THIS TIME FROM RAJAPUR, MAHARASHTRA.

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8. PARKASH SINGH BADAL: A FIFTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD FORMER CHIEF
MINISTER OF THE PUNJAB, AND ONLY AKALI IN THE CABINET,
BADAL WAS BORN IN WHAT BECAME WEST PAKISTAN, IN THE
FEROZEPUR DISTRICT IN THE INDIAN PUNJAB. HE IS CONSIDERED
ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST PUNJABI LANDLORDS. A GRADUATE OF
FOREMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IN LAHORE (1946), HE ENTERED
POLITICS THE NEXT YEAR AS AN AKALI DAL ACTIVIST. IN 1957,
BADAL WAS ELECTED TO THE PUNJAB ASSEMBLY ON THE CONGRESS
TICKET, SINCE THE AKALI DAL WAS NOT CONTESTING POLITICAL
OFFICES. LATER HE SERVED IN A COALITION AKALI DAL-JANA
SANGH GOVERNMENT IN VARIOUS MINISTERIAL CAPACITIES AND
FINALLY AS CHIEF MINISTER, IN 1970-71 IN AN AKALI DAL
GOVERNMENT.

9. SIKANDER BAKHI: NOW 58, BAKHT HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE
CONGRESS, BUT FOLLOWING THE PARTY SPLIT JOINED THE CONGRESS-O
AND BECAME A MEMBER OF THE AICC (O) AND ITS WORKING
COMMITTEE. A MUSLIM FROM THE CHANDNI CHOWK DISTRICT OF OLD
DELHI, BAKHT FIRST BECAME INVOLVED IN POLITICS DURING THE
COMMUNAL RIOTS OF 1947. DURING THE EMERGENCY, HE SPENT ABOUT

18 MONTHS IN JAIL.

10. H.M. (HIRUBHAI MULJIBHAI) PATEL: BORN IN BOMBAY IN 1904 AND EDUCATED THERE AND AT OXFORD, PATEL BECAME A CAREER CIVIL SERVANT IN THE PRESTIGIOUS INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE (ICS) AND ROSE TO THE RANK OF SECRETARY OF THE FINANCE MINISTRY
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BEFORE HE RESIGNED IN 1958. HE WAS HELD PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MUNDHRA SCANDAL INVOLVING SOME FRIENDS OR ASSOCIATES. HE TURNED TO POLITICS AND JOINED THE SWATANTRA PARTY, A CONSERVATIVE GROUPING FAVORING THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WHICH LATER MERGED INTO THE BLD AND ULTIMATELY THE JANATA PARTY. PATEL WAS FIRST ELECTED TO THE LOK SABHA IN 1971 ON THE SWATANTRA TICKET. NOT KNOWN AS AN EFFECTIVE POLITICAL LEADER, PATEL IS A QUITE SCHOLARLY TYPE, GOOD IN LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTEDLY PRO-WESTERN AND WELL-VERSED IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF THE US ON QUESTIONS SUCH AS KASHMIR AND ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN.

11. P. RAMACHANDRAN: RAMACHANDRAN, ONE OF THE THREE JANATA PARTY CANDIDATES ELECTED FROM TAMILNADU, HAS BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE TAMILNADU BRANCH OF THE CONGRESS-O. THIS IS HIS FIRST ELECTION TO PARLIAMENT AND HIS ENTRY INTO NATIONAL-LEVEL POLITICS. RAMACHANDRAN WAS OPPOSED TO THE JANATA PARTY'S DISASTROUS ALLIANCE WITH THE M DMK IN THE RECENT ELECTION IN TAMIL NADU.

12. PURUSHOTTAMLAL KAUSHIK: BORN IN 1930 IN MADHYA PRADESH, KAUSHIK OBTAINED HIS LAW DEGREE FROM NAGPUR UNIVERSITY, JOINED THE SOCIALIST PARTY IN 1952, AND ORGANIZED A NUMBER OF MOVEMENTS FOR LAND ALLOTMENTS AMONG THE TRIBAL PEOPLE IN HIS HOME DISTRICT. HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE MP UNIT OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND ITS LEADER IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY. HE WAS ARRESTED IN FEBRUARY 1975 FOR TRYING TO STOP THE POLICE FROM UYLNG FORCE AGAINST AGITATING STUDENTS IN RAIPUR. HE IS NOTABLE FOR HAVING DEFEATED INFORMATION MINISTER V.C. SHUKLA IN THE MARCH ELECTION IN RAJPUR.

13. SHANTI BHUSHAN: THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE CABINET WHO IS NOT ALSO A MEMBER OF EITHER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT, BHUSHAN GAINED FAME TWO YEARS AGO AS COUNSEL FOR RAJ NARIAN IN HE CASE WHICH RESULTED IN MRS. GANDHI'S ELECTION BEING SET ASIDE BY THE ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT. BORN IN 1925 TO A FAMILY OF
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RENOUWED LAWYERS IN ALLAHABAD, HE OBTAINED HIS LAW DEGREE FROM ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY, JOINED HIS FATHER'S PRACTICE, AND IN 1969 BECAME THE YOUNGEST ADVOCATE SENIOR STANDING COUNSEL AND THEN ADDITIONAL ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT. A MEMBER OF CONGRESS-O, HE BECAME TREASURER OF THE JANATA PARTY UPON ITS FORMATION.

14. RAVINDRA VARMA: BORN IN KERALA IN 1925 AND A GRADUATE IN ECONOMICS, VARMA WAS ACTIVE IN CONGRESS PARTY YOUTH AND STUDENT WINGS AND WAS FOR FOUR YEARS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD ASSEMBLY OF YOUTH (1958-62). HE SERVED IN THE LOK SABHA FROM 1962-67, AND WAS A CONSERVATIVE AND SUPPORTER OF MORARJI DESAI FOR THE PREMIERSHIP IN 1966. VARMA WAS ELECTED THIS YEAR FROM RANCHI, BIHAR. HE WAS WELL KNOWN TO EMBASSY OFFICERS WHILE IN PARLIAMENT IN THE 1960'S AND WAS DESCRIBED AS STOUTLY PRO-WESTERN ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, BUT ALSO A STRONG NATIONALIST AND A HARDLINER ON KASHMIR AND PAKISTAN POLICY.
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